A Candle lighted

At a Coal from the

ALTAR,

Whereby the KING and RULERS of this Nation with the People of this present Age may see the STONE on which many have stumbled, and the ROCK which hath broken to pieces unfaithful men once in Authority, who instead of protecting, did persecute the People of God, when they had the High Places of the Earth in possession.

And that these present Rulers may take warning betimes, least they stumble at the same Rock, and while they have opportunity they may rather become as Nursing-Fathers to the Flock of God within these Dominions, by giving due encouragement to tender Consciences, and men fearing God as in matters of Religion.

And this is directed unto you by a subject of the King of Righteousnes,

THO. SALTHOUSE.

Zeph. 1. 12. *And it shall come to pass that I will search* Jerusalem *with Candles, and punish the men that are setled upon their Lees, that say in their hearts, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.*

London, Printed for *Thomas Simmons*, at the *Bull* and *Mouth* near *Aldersgate*, 1660.

THE Vision of all hath been as the words of a Book sealed, which could neither be read by the learned nor unlearned, for no man in Heaven nor in Earth was found worthy to open the Book and to loose the Seals and to read thereon but the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah, that root and off-spring of *David* who hath prevailed to open it; and darkness hath covered all the Kingdoms of the world, and all the Kindreds of the Earth for many ages and generations, and the Great Whore arayed in Purple and Scarlet colour, and decked with gold and silver and pretious stones, hath had her seat upon the waters which is multitudes and peoples and tongues and languages, having in her hand a golden Cup filled with abominations and with the filthiness of her fornication, and with her the Kings and Inhabitants of the Earth have committed spiritual fornication, and have drunk of the Wine of her fornication, and they have given their power unto the Beast and the false prophet who maketh War against the Lamb and his followers; and they have drunk the blood of the Martyrs and Saints, and have by their Lawes compelled all, both free and bond, high and low, rich and poor to receive that mark of the Beast, and to bow down and worship his Image; but the faithful witnesses that had the Testimony of Jesus and the Word of God, who could not for Conscience sake bow to the Image of the Beast, nor receive his mark, have they slain in the streets of that great City spiritually called *Sodom* and *Egypt*, where our Lord Jesus Christ also was crucified by the Princes of the Gentiles who did not know him, and by force and violence in these last dayes and perilous times since there hath been a departing from the Faith once delivered unto the Saints, have the Princes of this world exercised Lordship over the heritage of God, by compelling and forcing people ignorantly to worship the unknown God in the Idols Tempels under pains and penalties of banishment, burning, stigmatizing, stoning to death, imprisonment and the like; and all the penalties inflicted upon and sustained by the Servants of God and Saints of the Most High, hath been by vertue of Authority derived from the higher Power, or from men in holy Order as they have been stiled; so that all the persecution of tender Con-

ſciences, and of the Prophets and Saints about Religion, and Religious exerciſes have been and may juſtly be charged upon the higher Power and holy Church ſo called; and all that have been caſt into Priſon for the Teſtimony of Jeſus and the Word of God hath been in the name of the higher Power, and all that have ſuffered the ſpoiling of their goods, and the loſs of liberty and eſtates, for not putting into the hireling Prieſts mouths, hath been by the higher Powers as in the behalf of God and holy Church, and many have ſuffered for theſe things as it hath been ſaid in his Highneſs his name in this laſt time of Apoſtacy, in which the day hath been dark over the Prophets, that they have not had any Viſion or Anſwer of God nor Revelation from him, but have denyed Revelation and immediate Inſpiration, and have been in darkneſs and blindneſs as in the land of the ſhadow and death, by whoſe inſtigation cruel yokes of bondage have been impoſed upon the *Iſrael* of God in this long night of darkneſs and confuſion, but in patience have we waited for him whoſe coming was prepared as the morning, and in anſwer to our earneſt expectation in an acceptable time, when there was none to help, the Arm of the Lord was made bare to bring Salvation.

And now the Everlaſting Day-ſtar hath appeared, and the God of all the Families of the Earth is bringing a remnant of Righteous Souls out of that *Egyptian* darkneſs which hath covered the whole earth in the time of Antichriſts Reign, and from under that thick vail which hath been ſpread (over this) and all Nations, hath the Lord delivered a People that ſometimes were walking in darkneſs, and wandring from Mountain to Mountain in the night of Apoſtacy, as old *Iſrael* did in the cloudy and dark day, like ſheep without a ſhepherd, and as *Iſrael* after the fleſh was delivered from their great bondage and hard ſervitude in outward *Egypt* and *Babylon*, even ſo hath the Lord called, and by his own Arm gathered his People out of ſpiritual *Egypt* and *Babylon*, where they long mourned in deſolation under the power of a ſtrange King and cruel Task-maſters; and this people are fully perſwaded in their minds not to return back into *Egypt* again, but to travel on through the Kingdoms of *Edom*, & the borders of *Moab*, until they come to the promiſed Land which is purchaſed to be a poſſeſſion and peaceable habitation for them and their offſping from generation to generation.

And this people whom the Lord hath called out of darkneſs into his marvellous light, are a diſpiſed people, miſ-repreſented to men in Authority, as diverſe in their Lawes and Cuſtoms from all other people, and they are reproached with that name of diſtinction which is the Object of their adverſaries indignation, being reproachfully called *Quakers*, becauſe they tremble at the Word of the Lord and walkes humbly before him; and ſince the time that the Lord hath appeared for our Salvation and Deliverance out of darkneſs, bondage and captivity, and ſince we ſet our faces towards *Zion* the City of Truth, we have been tryed with cruel mockings, bonds and impriſonments, and we have born the reproaches of *Moab*, and the revilings of the children of *Ammon*, yea both *Gabel Ammon* and *Ameleck* have ſet themſelves in oppoſition againſt Gods peculiar treaſure, and the uncircumciſed in heart and eares *Aſſur* and the *Philiſtians* hath joyned with them to help the inceſtuous children of Lot in their cruelty, perſecution and oppoſition againſt the Lords Servants, thoſe weak things of the world whom he hath choſen to place his Name among, and theſe poor of the world whom he hath made rich in Faith.

But he that reproved Kings for the ſake of his people, ſaying, Touch not mine annointed, and do my Prophets no harm, hath ſmitten ſome of our Adverſaries and oppoſers with a deadly wound, and with Equity will he plead the Cauſe of the oppreſſed that have no helper in the Earth.

Therefore hearken unto this Word ye Heads and Rulers of the people, and give ear O Houſe of the King, and all you in Authority, whether in Church or State, or of matters ſpiritual or temporal, this is the Word of the Lord God unto you in this your day of Tryal, touch not the Lords annointed, nor offend not any of thoſe little ones who are coming up out *Egypt* and *Babylon*, neither ſeek to ſet up your ſelves as Lords over Gods Heritage, by making Laws or preſcribing wayes of worſhip to impoſe upon thoſe tender Conſciences and thoſe Righteous Souls contrary to the ſpiritual Law of God (according to his promiſe) written in their hearts; for behold the day is come in which the Lord is putting his Spirit in the inward parts, and writing his Law in the hearts and in the minder of his people, ſo that we cannot ſubmit to the

Lawes

Laws of the *Medes* and the *Persians*, nor bow down to worship *Nebuchadnezzars* Image at the ſound of the Muſick, whether Bell, Organs, Drum or Trumpet, neither can we conform to the old Antichriſtian Traditions which in the time of ignorance was taught for Doctrines and Church Ordinances, and impoſed upon our Fore-fathers to be obſerved by them under pains, penalties and corporal puniſhments, neither can we worſhip or bow down to the reſemblance or likeneſs of any thing either in Heaven above or in the Earth beneath, nor in the waters under the Earth, leaſt we ſhould provoke the Lord to jealouſie, who will not give his glory to another, nor we cannot have mens perſons in admiration, becauſe of advantage, or for fear of perſecution, knowing that he who reſpecteth perſons doth commit ſin, and is convinced of the Law as a tranſgreſſor.

Wherefore all you that are in Authority ſet up to Rule amongſt men as Magiſtrates, whether ſpiritual, Military or Civil, remember what the Rock of *Iſrael* hath ſaid, He that Rules amongſt men muſt be Juſt, ruling in the Fear and Wiſdom of God, that he may be a terrour to the evil-doers, and a praiſe to them that do well; and if you thus rule for God in his fear, then will your light go forth as a morning without clouds, and thoſe under your Government will revive as the Corn, and ſpring up as the tender graſs out of the earth, by clear ſhining after the rain, and you muſt fear God and work Righteouſneſs, and hate oppreſſion and covetouſneſſe, elſe you cannot pleaſe God nor Rule for him amongſt men, neither can your Government be bleſſed, nor of long continuance, except you be Wiſe and Learned, Juſt and Righteous, Holy and Humble, Gentle and eaſie to be entreated; therefore be inſtructed O Kiug and all ye Rulers of the earth, and ſerve the Lord with fear, and walk humbly before him, for humility goeth before true honour, and except you be Humble, Holy and Upright you cannot be owned or accounted as the honourable of the earth, although (for a ſeaſon) you have the high Places thereof in poſſeſſion to prove and try you as others have bin that were before you, whom the Lord hath caſt out & rejected from bearing Rule amongſt men (not alone for your ſakes) but becauſe of their unfaithfulneſs to the Lord in their day, and the heavy yoaks which they laid upon

upon the necks of those over whom they bore Rule, and by reason of their envy, violence and unkindness unto those sons of *Jacob* the *Israel* of God, who are passing thorow your borders out of the house of bondage, who did desire nothing of them nor now of you, but to pass peaceably by the high way which is cast up and prepared for the Redeemed of the Lord out of *Egypt* and *Assyria*, to that holy City whose Builder and Maker is God, where they may worship God in the Spirit and Truth, in the beauty of holiness; and now let it enter into your Consideration, that the Lord hath had a remnant of Righteous Servants in this Nation, that have not defiled their garments with the detestible things, nor with the abominations that have been committed in the land, and that have not bowed their knee unto *Baal*; and these are they that trembles at the Word of the Lord, and they have been alwayes grieved and oppressed by reason of the great evils and abominations that have been committed in the land, not onely open prophaneness, pride and wantonness among the baser sort, but also in things relating to Religion and the Worship of God, and Church Ordinances (so called) and the Spirit of Grace and Truth which is poured forth from on high, and which rests upon them, hath strove from time to time with the Rulers of this Nation for Freedom and Liberty of Conscience in matters of such weighty concernment as the Work & Worship of God, and sometimes the Cry thereof hath entred into the ears of King, Parliaments & others in Authority, and then they would promise or at least pretend a Reformation in Church and State, and much action hath been in this Nation in a few years last past, and the Lord hath overturned one Government after another without either Bow, Battel-Ax or outward Weapon, but not without giving them warning by his Watch-men, either in word or writing, for they have had precept upon precept, and line upon line, and the Lord hath pleaded with them by his Judgements, and when his hand hath been upon them, then they would humble themselves for a season, and set upon doing something in answer to the expectation of that Spirit that did strive with them; but it may and alwayes hath been observed, that the people in whom this oppressed Spirit did strive and operate most of all, and who were most zealous for a Reformation they have alwayes been

been accounted as Heretricks and Sectaries, and reproached with the names of Puritans, Round-heads, and Quakers, and such like brands of reproach as might render them odious to men in Authority, or as a discontented people not fit to live upon the Earth, yet nevertheless the witness of God in the Consciences of Men in places of trust hath sometimes answered to the cry of the oppressed, so that they began to remove some Antichristian Yoaks of Bondage out of the way, which was the greatest burden to tender Consciences; as for instance several Monuments of Idolatry and Superstition was abolished, all representations of the persons of the Trinity, Angels or Saints in or about the Cathedral, Collegiate or Parish Church or Chappel (so called) and the High Altars taken down, and all Superstitious Vestments, as Copes, Surplices, Roods, Holy Water, Funts, Crosses, Crucifixes, and Pictures defaced, and no more to be used in or about the Worship of God.

Likewise several Clauses and Articles of Ordinances and Acts of Parliament repealed which did impose Penalties upon people for not coming to Parish Churches, for not keeping Holy Daies, and for not hearing the Common Prayer, with Penalties enjoyned to be imposed upon such as should use or read the Common Prayer in any Church, or Chappel, or private Family, as may appear by several Ordinances and Acts of Parliament about that Year (44) and many Carnal invented Ordinances of the Church of *Rome*, as sprinkling infants at the Funt, singing before the dead, bowing to the high Altar, rails about the Communion Tables, and abundance of such like things relating to the Worship and Service of God which was known to be but meer scraps and Rags of Popery, were denied, as beggarly Elements and rudiments of the world, and no Ordinances of Jesus Christ to be practised among the Protestants.

Now these were good beginnings in order towards a Reformation, in spiritual things, and in relation to Church Worship, but alas, we have seen many good appearances, and such fair promises come to little or nothing, that we are jealous with a Godly Jealousie lest the old Serpent should deceive these Rulers, and draw them back into bondage again in things of this Nature as he hath done them that formerly had the ordering and disposing of the great Affairs of this Kingdom, who promised

promiſed a Reformation both in Church and State, and yet after theſe old corrupted Popiſh Ceremonies and Laws, relating to ſpiritual Cognizance ſo called was aboliſhed by the King, Parliament, Protector and his Councel, they ſoon fell from thoſe good beginnings, and ſought to ſet up themſelves and their own Intereſts, and then Religion was little regarded, but as a Cloak for them to carry their own deſigns under, and when they were ſetled in the high places, then Magiſtrates and the Prieſts of the high Places conſulted and took Councel together againſt the Lord and againſt his Annointed, and inſtead of the old ſuperſtitious Laws and Ordinances they began to make new Laws to limit the Spirit to their Directions and Preſcriptions, and Obſervations, by which the Servants and Handmaids of the Lord, whoſe Conſciences were tender, and could not deny one Form to take up another inſtead thereof, was haled before their Judgment Seats, and ſomtimes whipped, perſecuted, fined, and impriſoned for reproving ſin in the Gates, for not ſwearing, for meeting together in the fear of the *Lord*, & ſuch like things, until the Lord pleaded with the Rulers and viſited for thoſe things, and made that Rock againſt which they ſtrove and could not prevail, a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a Rock of offence on which they are fallen and broken to pieces.

Likewiſe *King Charles* the firſt, and his Lords and Commons aſſembled in Parliament, took away the High Commiſſion Court when they ſaw the many harms and inconveniences that were in it, and that it was a great ſnare and a bondage to tender Conſciences, and aboliſhed ſeveral Acts and Ordinances, that did bind people in an uniformity thereunto, as may at large appear by an Act of the Parliament begun and held at *Weſtminſter* the third of the ninth month called *November* in the year (1640.) In which Act it is expreſſed that no Arch Biſhop, Biſhop, nor Vicar-general, nor no Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical Judg exerciſing Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical Power or Authority ſhall by any grant, licenſe, or Commiſſion of the Kings Majeſty, his Heirs or Succeſſors from and after the firſt of *Auguſt*, 1641. inflict any pain, penalty, or fine, amercement, impriſonment, or other Corporal puniſhment upon any of the Kings Subjects for any

matter or thing whatsoever belonging to Spiritual Cognizance or Jurisdiction, and that they shall not administer any Corporal Oath whereby any may be forced to confess or accuse themselves in any offence, whereby they are liable or exposed to any censure, pain, penalty or punishment, on a spiritual account, upon pain that every person who shall offend contrary to the Act above mentioned, shall forfeit and pay treble dammage to every person thereby grieved, and the sum of 100 pound to him or them, who shall first demand or sue for the same: Now this was a Legal Authority, and this Act remains in as full force and vertue, as if there had been no interruption of that power, or as if it had been made by the King and Parliament now in being, and therefore it may be expected that the Kings Subjects shall not suffer any penalty for not swearing, or upon any spiritual account whatsoever, for the King hath discharged all Judges and Ministers of Justice in the name of himself, his Heirs, and Successors not to impose any Oath, pain, penalty or punishment upon any person or persons, male or female, as upon a spiritual account; and if the Kings Successors shall put this Law in execution, it will be some ease to tender Consciences, and will give the good people of these Nations hopes, that a Reformation may yet be wrought and compleated in this Nation after all these strange alterations and overturnings, though it is contrary to the expectation of many from any thing that appears visible.

Consider in time what the Lord God requires at your hands, who are now intrusted with the Government, and bring not upon the Nation the old Antichristian yoak of bondage, which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear, let Christ Jesus the Everlasting high Priest who is the souls Bishop, have the whole power in the Church as the head of it, and let him order all things therein according to his Heavenly Wisdom and wonderful Councel, both as to the Calling, Ordination, and sending forth Ministers, to preach the Everlasting Gospel, and Pastors according to his own heart and mind, that the people may be fed with knowledg and understanding, and let these Ministers sent forth by Christ who have the mind of Christ, and do abide in his

Doctrine,

Doctrine, have free Liberty without persecution to preach the Gospel in all the Provinces of these Dominions, and suffer no Judge nor Minister of Justice, to inflict any Penalty or Corporal punishment upon them on this spiritual account, nor to cast them into prison for the Testimony which they hold, and which is agreeable to the Testimony of Jesus, the Word of God, and Scripture of Truth, for it is both against the Law of God, & also against the good Laws of this Nation that any man should suffer punishment, persecution or imprisonment on any Religious or Spiritual account whatsoever.

Therefore let the world know, even your adversaries themselves, that you are of the Christian Religion, by giving due encouragement to tender Consciences, and to Christs Ministers to preach the Word in season and out of season without molestation or interruption, by any colour or pretence of Authority derived from that higher Power.

For he who ascended up on high, who led Captivity captive, hath given gifts unto men for the work of that Ministry, that there may not be a famine of hearing the Word in this Nation; and forasmuch as the Lord hath spoken, we cannot but Prophesie & Declare of the things which we have seen and heard, and that which we have tasted and handled of the Word of life, that people may be turned from the darkness to the light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and it is the Command of Christ unto his Ministers, that as they have freely received they must freely give, that the Gospel may be made without charge, and it must be freely preached, not for filthy lucre sake, but of a ready mind; and a necessity hath laid upon the Ministers of Christ in these last dayes and perilous times (though the more they love the less they are beloved again) to reprove sin in the Gates, and to give warning to Magistrates and men in Authority both in word and writing by way of admonition, exortation, wholsom advice and counsel, that in the sight of the Lord they may be clear of the blood of all men, and that all might be left without excuse in that day when God shall Judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to the Gospel: and because Judgement hath been turned backward, and good

Councel rejected by Protector, Parliaments and others once in Authority, and the Servants of the Lord cruelly persecuted by whom it was directed to them; therefore hath the Lord rejected them from bearing the Sword of Justice; and now you are set as at the stearn of Government, and this is your day of Tryal, and the Lord God will prove you & try you whether you will be a terrour to the evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well; or limit his Spirit as others have done before you; and if you expect subjection to your power, you must Rule for God in love and fear and humility, and not as Lords over Gods heritage, and then you will engage all the honest and upright hearted in these Nations to submit to your Government, not for wrath or fear of punishment, but for Conscience sake; and this will be more honour to you and your Government, then if you could force every individual person both professors & prophane in the Nation to own you for fear of your wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, and the best effects of it will but make hypocrites for fear of punishment & persecution, if God do not perswade the hearts of people by his Word and Spirit, & submit their spirits by his Power to very Ordinance of man both spiritual and temporal for the Lords sake; they that were before you promised and pretended much as in matter of Reformation, and removing of oppression both in Church and State; but we may and do expect better things from you that have promised less, and not made so much show of holiness as they did, which if it so come to pass the Lord shall have the glory, by whom you are permitted to bear Rule in the Nation, and you shall not loose your reward, if you be found faithful in what he requires of you according to what you know; but if you walk in the steps of Tyrants and Oppressors, and smite with the fist of wickedness, and persecute tender Consciences for and concerning the Law, and Worship of their God; Then What can you expect? But the same reward from him that is no respecter of persons, which they already have received that hated the reproofs of instruction, and the good and wholsom Advice and Councel from time to time directed

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unto them by these suffring servants of the Lord, that have all the day long been accounted as sheep for the slaughter, who are coming up out of *Egypt*, and travelling towards the Promised Land.

Now if it be matter of Conscience to one sort of people in this Nation, or if it be supposed by them that the Book of Common Prayer or Divine Service so called, is the best way of Worship, and that they suppose it is well pleasing and acceptable to the Lord, and from such a perswation they do determine to practice it in their Families, and in places of publick worship, then let them that are so perswaded give liberty to others that are of another perswation for the exercise of their Consciences according to their perswasion and Principles, and let there be no fighting nor fining, persecution nor imprisonment, nor no corporal Oath or punishment be inflicted on the bodies and estates of the good people of this Nation, upon any Ecclesiastical or spiritual account, according to the true intent and meaning of the Act above-mentioned, and as the Law of God requires of every man to do unto others as he would have others to do unto him, and this will satisfie all the sober-minded and reasonable men in the Nation, and make way for a happy settlement of pure Religion, everlasting Righteousnes, and perfect peace among people in matters relating to the Worship and Service of God, and in all things appertaining to the spiritual Kingdom and Government of Christ Jesus, the chief shepherd and Bishop of our Souls, whose right it is to reign as Supream head of the Church, who is the Authour, Finisher and Defender of our Faith, and who is so to be owned especially in this Nation by them who are of the the Protestant Religion, and who have denyed and protested against the Popes Supremacy and usurpt Authority; and as his Supremacy and Authority is denyed, so let his Lawes & Institutions & impositions be denyed also, that it may manifestly be declared that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, who is the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles.

And they that are established upon him have no need of the Turks Alcorah for a Rule to walk by, nor the Popes

Mass

Mass to teach them the knowledge of God and Christ; for God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in their hearts to teach them the knowledge of God and his Wayes, and they that have received the Spirit of God, and can pray with the Spirit, and with the understanding have no need of the Bishops Book of composed or Common-payer, which is a set Form of words that every prophane person can repeat, for the Spirit it self will help their infirmities that have received it, and make intercession unto God for the Saints and for Kings and all that are in Authority, and they that have this Spirit of God for a Rule to walk by, which is agreeable to the Scripture of the Prophets and Apostles, they need not the Presbyters directory as a Rule for publick Worship, Church Ordinances and Administrations, for the God of Order teacheth them how to walk and worship, and when to speak and pray as they are moved by his Spirit, and in the Church of God they may all Prophecy one by one, and if any thing be revealed unto him that sitteth by, the first is to hold his peace, for the Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets, and there is no lording one over another, neither is the Spirit limitted or confined to him that has the highest place in the Assembly, for such have taken away the Key of knowledge, and have forsaken the right Way, and are out of the Doctrine of Christ, who are called of men Master, and have the chiefest seats in the Synagogues; and this is not the Order of the Churches of the Saints, but by them in this Order the Saints are persecuted, and haled out of their Assemblies and before Magistrates; and the time of this ignorance hath been long in which the pretended Leaders of the people in this Nation have caused them to err, and they that were led by them have been destroyed for want of the good knowledge of the Lord, for since the time that the right Way was forsaken, and the way of *Baalam* followed, the Priests have preached for hire, and they have taught fear towards God by the precepts of men; so that the unknown God hath been ignorantly worshipped in the Old Mass-houses commonly called Churches, which is the invention and work of mens hands, and in which is the very seat of the I-

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mage of jealousie spoken of by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, and covered all manner of graven Images, Pictures and abominable Beasts, and the similitude of creeping things, and all the Idols of the house of *Israel*, portrayed or painted round about upon the Walls, and in the highest places of these Idol Temples have the Hirelings by Authority and Commission from the higher Power made merchandize of the Scriptures, of the Prophets and Apostles, which were spoken forth freely by the holy men of God in their day, and written afore time not to be sold for money; but for our learning and admonition upon whom the ends of the World is come; and because we have declared against such practises, we have been accused for denying the Scriptures and the Ministers of the Gospel, and because we cannot own those Mass-houses for Churches which were set up in the time of Popery, as the Idols Temples were set up when *Israel* had forgotten their Maker, and forsaken the fountain of living water, as it's written in the Prophets, When *Israel* had forgotten her Maker she builded Temples, and *Judah* multiplied fenced Cities; therefore we have been accused by the prophane and ignorant people, that we deny the Churches, because we cannot contribute to the repairing of these painted houses, in which are all these Pictures and Images portraied upon the Walls round about, and because of these things by an usurped Authority we have suffered the spoiling of our goods from time to time, and have been made a prey to the teeth of merciless men, and because for Conscience sake we could not come to these houses to hear the Priests preach for hire, and so put into the mouth of the false prophet and Idol shepherds, we have been Summoned by Law suites to *London* from all parts of this Nation, and have had our goods spoiled and our bodies imprisoned, some until death by a cruel hard-hearted generation of hireling Presbyterian Priests and Impropriators; so that we may truly say, Satans power hath been great, and the time hath been long in which he that could persecute the People of God called *Quakers* by vertue of Authority derived from the higher Power, did think he did God good service; but the Lord hath visi-

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ted and will visit for these things, and with equity will he plead for the meek of the earth, and we have given our power and committed our cause unto him, so that our dependance is not upon the Arm of flesh, or men of might, but in the Lord in whom there is Everlasting strength; Nevertheless, that you who are set up and intrusted amongst men as the chief Authority in the Nation, may have precept upon precept, and line upon line as others had in their day, a necessity is laid on the Lords Servants and Hand-maids, who loves not their lives unto the death, to speak and write unto you of the things which they have seen and heard concerning you, as they are commanded of God, that to Gods witness in the sight of the Lord they may be made manifest, and that you may have warning in this your day not to touch the Lords annointed, nor to do any harm unto his Prophets, whether they be Sons or Daughters, Servants or Hand-maids upon whom God hath poured forth of his Spirit from on high in these latter dayes; And if it be in the hearts of you who are the present Rulers of this Nation, to settle & establish Religion as others have attempted to do, and so have limitted the Spirit of God by their Ordinances and Traditions, let it be wisely considered whether God require such a thing at your hands, yea or nay; for many who were supposed to be Wise and Learned men, have been mistaken in this very particular, and instead of Reformation they have brought in oppression and persecution, and instead of a happy settlement they have caused great strife, heart-burnings, disputations and open contention about Church Ordinances, Worship, Doctrine and Discipline, and one sort have cryed lo here is Christ, and others have said here is the place where men ought to Worship, and others they cry this is the Good Old Way, let all be compelled to conform to this Way, and to our Order and Ordinances and Discipline, and let all be made subject to that Worship which our Fore-fathers owned, and to that Church Government which they lived under; and so would have all limitted to their Worship, and compelled to their way by corporal punishments, if for Conscience sake they cannot

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be conformable; so that there is need of [illegible] this thing, & the best way to preserve peace in [illegible] protect all people of all perswasions alike in their Civil Religious Rights, and not to compel any by force or violence to any worship contrary to a full perswasion in their minds; for in this very Particular *Jacob's* Family hath been red by all sorts of people and governments of late in this Nation, both Parliaments, Protector, and profaners and prophane, and the Lords peculiar treasure hath been trampled upon, as people not fit to be protected nor to live upon the earth; and even like as the high-minded Councellors or Courtiers of the King of *Babylon* did in their day envy *Israel*, and incense the King against that people who were dispersed in all the Provinces of his Kingdoms, as being adverse in their Laws from all other people, and that they did not observe the Kings Laws; even so have the proud and high-minded men in high Places in these dayes labored to incense the Supream Magistrates against a dispersed remnant of the Seed of *Jacob*, whose captivity the Lord is returning out of the Land of the North Countrey, and out of all places where they have been scattered, and we have been misrepresented both to Parliaments and others by the Priests of the high Places, as *Amos* was unto the King by *Amaziah* the Priest of *Bethel*, who sent unto *Jeroboam* King of *Israel*, saying, *Amos* hath conspired against thee in the midst of the House of *Israel*, the land is not able to bear his words, when he declared unto them that which the Lord had shewed unto him concerning them; and without all Controversie some of our old Adversaries by whom we have been persecuted ever since we were a people, may yet go about to perswade these present Rulers that it is not for the Kings profit to suffer us to enjoy our Liberty and Religion within his Dominions; and so wait for a Law from him to limit the Holy One of *Israel*, as the uncircumcised in all ages and generations have done, and as the Rulers of this last age have laboured and endeavoured to do, until the Lord hath made the House of *Jacob* as a fire, and the House of *Joseph* as a flame, and the House of *Esau* like stubble fully dry, and

hath conſumed their bryars and thorns as in one day; for the ſame ſpirit of envy remains yet unſatisfied in the Prieſts of the high Places, who prayed againſt the King and for the Protector, and cryed out for aſſiſtance, like as the unbelieving Jews cryed, *Men of Iſrael help, theſe are they that will turn the world upſide down*: help *Protector* and *Parliament*, *Councel*, *Committee* and *Army*; make your Law both *Military* and *Civil*, a defence of our Faith and Religion, Church Miniſtry and Ordinances, elſe theſe men that pretends the Motion of the Spirit, and immediate Revelation from Heaven, thoſe *Quakers* (that trembles at the Word of God) will prevail againſt us & undermine the foundation of all our great Truths, and then not onely our Craft is in danger, by which we have got a livelyhood for our ſelves and Families, but alſo our *Traditional Ordinances* (and thoſe old Maſs-houſes our Churches) in which are all theſe pleaſant pictures painted upon the Walls, and the glory of their magnificence will come into diſeſteem, and ſo by a corrupt new invented Law hath iniquity been eſtabliſhed, and the Saints of the moſt high perſecuted, and impriſoned for *the Teſtimony of Jeſus, and the Word of God*; and their Righteous Souls have cryed, *How long Lord? How long Holy and True? Wilt not thou Judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the Earth?* And becauſe Judgement was not ſpeedily executed upon the uſurpers of Authority & workers of iniquity, and oppreſſors of the Juſt, all the falſe Prophets and hireling Prieſts promiſed peace and ſafety to themſelves & to the men in Authority, and they were perſwaded that *their Mountain was ſo invincible that it could never have been moved.* Nay, all the chief ones of the Nation would not have believed that an enemy to their imperfect peace ſhould have entred into this Nation, to take all the antient high Places thereof again in poſſeſſion; But what ſhall we ſay to theſe things, the purpoſe of the Lord muſt come to paſs, *That the oppreſſed may go free*, and that the ſins of the falſe Prophets, and the iniquity of the hireling Prieſts, and the corruption of Rulers may be puniſhed, which is the Cauſe of all the Judgements of the Lord upon the Nation; for all the Judgements which came upon *Jeruſalem*, who had neglected the day of their viſita-

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tion, and mocked Gods Messengers, and stoned them that were sent unto them, was for the sins of the Prophets, and the iniquity of her priests that shed the blood of the just in the midst of her, that wandred as blind men in the streets, and were polluted with blood, so that they would not touch their garments, *Lam.* 4. 13. And this is the Cause of all these alterations and overturnings, which is so strange and marvellous to the beholders, that such strong men should wax feeble and leave their glory to others, not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord God, and according to his Word by his Servants the Prophets, whom they have mocked, despised, persecuted and shameful entreated in the day of their prosperity and exaltation.

But they would not receive instruction, and therefore must they receive correction; they would not be gathered, when the Lord would have gathered them as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, and therefore are they scattered and broken to pieces; and that Stone which the Builders refused, is become a Stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence unto them, on which they are fallen and broken, and snared and taken; and whosoever shall strive with their Maker, and fight against the Lord shall not prosper nor prevail, for the Lord will thunder out of heaven upon his adversaries, & will break them to pieces; but this is the portion and heritage of his suffering Servants, whose Faith stands in his Power, & whose Righteousness is of him; every tongue that riseth in Judgment against them shall be condemned, and this is the honour of all the Saints, to bind Kings in Chains, and Nobles with fetters of Iron, and to execute upon the Heathen the Judgements written, *Psal.* 149. 8. For the Lord will not cast off his People, neither will he forsake his Inheritance, who are unto him as the Apple of his Eye, and whosoever shall offend any of those little ones, whose Faith stands in the Power of God, and who trembles at the Word of his Holiness, *It were better for him that a Mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he drowned in the midst of the Sea*; and though the wicked be highly exalted, and joyn hand and hand against the Seed which God hath blessed, yet must not they go unpunished, though the Servants of the Lord be far from oppression, or rendring unto them evil for evil; for although we were all the day long accounted as sheep for the slaughter, and

have been ſmitten with the tongue of the uncircumciſed, and with the fiſt of wickedneſs, & every Horn of the Beaſts head hath puſhed at us from time to time, yet have we not deſired fire from Heaven to conſume our adverſaries, neither have we ſought to be avenged on them, or deſired their overthrow, God is witneſs for us; but we have loved them that hated us without a Cauſe, and we have prayed for them that perſecuted us, and to this day we deſire not their death, or that they ſhould be dealt with as they have dealt with others, and that their treſpaſſes may be forgiven them, more then they have forgiven others; and that the Lord would humble them in their afflictions, that they might return to him and know that the Moſt High Rules in the Kingdomes of men, who deſires not the death of ſinners, but rather that all men every where ſhould repent and come to the knowledge of his truth, for he waits to be gracious, becauſe he delights in the exerciſe of loving kindneſs, and there is mercy with him that he may be feared.

And as for the ſtrange Act of the Lord which he hath brought to paſs ſo far, contrary to the expectation of many, who hath ſwept away the refuge of lyes and the unrighteous covering, under which many were hid until the Lord appeared, who is bringing down the loftineſs of men that had ſet their neſts on high, and who were ready to ſay within themſelves every one in his own heart, *I ſit as a Queen and ſhall ſee no more ſorrow, I'le aſcend into Heaven, and I will exalt my Throne above the ſtars of God, I will ſit alſo upon the Mount of the Congregation in the ſides of the North*, whom God hath brought down into contempt, and near unto the ſides of the pit, and upon whom he hath brought theſe two things in one day, even deſolation, widow-hood and loſs of Children; let none rejoice over them, nor ſeek to be avenged on them by killing their bodies or deſtroying their ſubſtance, nor be lifted up by their fall, for all theſe things have happened unto them for examples unto ſuch as after all theſe things ſhall live ungodly, and lift up themſelves as Lords over Gods heritage; for all things that have happened unto them, & all things written aforetime is for the admonition of theſe preſent Rulers & this generation, that they may not ſit down to eat and drink and riſe up to play as in the dayes of *Noah* and *Lot*, for he that ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to

Hell,

Hell, and delivered them into Chains of darkneſs to be reſerved unto Judgement; nor the old world that ſinned, who had corrupted their wayes upon the earth, but brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly, and turned the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* into aſhes, condemning them with an overthrow for their ungodly deeds, 2. *Pet.* and he that cut off from *Iſrael*, both head and tail, branch and ruſh in one day, the antient and the honourable, he is the Head, and the Prophet that teacheth lyes, he is the tail, *Eſay* 9. 14. and who hath reproved Kings for the ſake of his People, ſaying, Touch not my annointed, and do my Prophets no harm, he is the ſame both in Juſtice and Power at this day, and his hand is not ſhortned, neither is he ſlack as ſome men count ſlackneſs, but will render a Juſt recompence of reward unto every man according to his works, whether they be good or evil, and the ſin of *Sodom* muſt not go unpuniſhed, for pride goes before deſtruction, and a high mind before a fall; therefore fear the Lord and tremble at the Word of his holineſs all ye Rulers and People upon the earth, and meet the Judge by the way, kiſs the Son, leaſt he be angry, if once his wrath be kindled but a little, bleſſed are all they that puts their truſt in him.

Oh, who would not fear the King of Nations, whom God hath determined (by a perpetual Decree) to ſet upon the holy Hill of *Zion*; by whom Kings reign, and Princes Decree Juſtice, and who will *Rule the Nations with a rod of Iron, and break them in pieces like a Potters Veſſel*, And unto whom God will give *the Heathen for an Inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the Earth for a Poſſeſſion*; That the Government may be upon *His Shoulder* from generation to generation; of the increaſe of whoſe righteous Government and Peace there ſhall be *no End*: And unto him who hath been deſpiſed and rejected amongſt men, and whoſe Viſage hath been more marred, than any man, againſt whom the Kings of the Earth have ſhut their mouths, and ſaid, *We will not have this man to Reign over us*, Even unto this man of Sorrows, who is *acquainted with grief*, muſt all the ends of the earth look for ſalvation, And unto him muſt all the Kings of the Earth, and the Mighty men, and the chief Captains bring their glory,

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and their honour, and cast their Crowns at his Feet; that He (whose Right it is) may have the Crown, and sway the Scepter in the Kingdoms of men; and he must reign till *All his Enemies be made his Foot-stool*, and all *Thrones* and *Dominions*, *Principalities*, and *Powers* must be made subject unto him; and they that will not have him to reign, must be be broken to pieces; And this is the Foundation which God hath laid in *Zion*, and *Other Foundation can no man lay, then that which is laid*, which is Jesus Christ, the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, and whosoever believeth and buildeth on him, shall never be ashamed nor confounded; But they that believe not on him, shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and snared, and taken; And this is the *Rock*, and *Corner-Stone*, which the Builders have refused, which to us is elect and precious, and is become the *Head-Stone* of the *Corner*, and the *Top-Stone* of that spiritual Building, which is *fitly framed together*, *and is growing unto an holy Temple in the Lord*; and that house which is builded on this Foundation, shall stand as Mount *Zion*, which cannot be moved; for it is not divided against it self, neither can the Gates of Hell prevail against it; For whosoever are established in Righteousnesse upon this *Rock*, are not soon shaken in minde, nor tossed to and fro *with every winde of Doctrine*, *by the slight of men*, *whereby they lie in wait* by Craft, Policy,, and cunning devised Fables *to draw people from the hope of the Gospel*, *and from the simplicity that is in Christ*. Neither doth these people (who are as *Living stones* of the spiritual house) cry to the Magistrates and outward Powers to have Religion setled by outward force, impoling penalties upon *Non-Conformists* unto, and Disturbers of their Way, and Worship, and Ordinances; For they are already setled, and satisfied, and established in the true Religion, and in Righteousnes, and it is the Double-minded, who are *unstable like the Waters*, and are tossed to and fro like the *troubled Sea*, that are unsetled, and the best way to settle such in the true Religion, or to leave them without excuse, is to suffer the Ministers of Gods Word to preach the Gospel in the Power and Demonstration of the Spirit, that the witnesse of God may be raised in them, and the sober Principle brought forth to rule men in

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matters both *Religious* and *Civil*; and this meek spirit and Principle is according to the will of God, and minde of Christ; And as this comes to be raised up by a powerful free Ministry, to rule in men, or in Families, Congregations, and Nations, so they come to be setled, and stayed, and builded up a spiritual house, that the Lord may dwel in them, as he hath said, *To this man will I look thats humble, and of a broken heart, and trembleth at my word, and I'le walk in them, and dwell in them* (saith the Lord,) *and they shall be my sonnes and daughters.*

And that which is required of you, is to keep the peace, and to be a Terror to the Evil-doers, and not to suffer wicked men to fight, and persecute, and hale out of Assemblies, and smite with the fist of wickednesse, nor to assault the people of God in their peaceable Meetings, and to suffer no fighting, nor striking, nor imprisonment, nor killing men about Religion, and Worship, and Ordinances; For they that will fight and strike about Religion, will never be setled in nor satisfied with any way of worship, until their minds be changed, and their hands cleansed and their hearts purified; neither will such adorn the Gospel by a good conversation, under what name, pretence, or profession soever; for that spirit is against every appearance of Truth in purity, and an enemy unto the Lord by wicked works

Therefore all you who are in the High places of the earth, wait for counsel and direction from the Lord, how to be ordered in this particular; and be not hasty to give consent or encouragement to one sort more then another, or to the people of one perswasion and judgement, to be as Lords over all others; for this hath proved the ruine and destruction of them whom the Lord hath cast out before you: If you will be followers of Christ, and rule for God, you must be meek and lowly in heare, and take up the Crosse to your own wills, that you may be found among the *Lambs faithful followers*, and numbred among *the dust of Jacob*, whose Tents cannot be prevailed against by any Enchantment whatsoever.

And now all people to whom this is directed, While the Candle of the Lord shineth upon your heads, and giveth

Light

Light unto you, walk in the light thereof, and be not high-minded, nor self-willed, nor soon angry, but fear the Lord, and follow after Righteousnesse and Truth, Peace and Union, that strife (and contention, wars, and fightings, killing, and imprisoning about Religion, and Worship, and Ministers maintenance) may cease and come to an end; and let God in all things (relating to his Worship) have the preheminence, and the ordering and disposing of his People, that trembles at his word, and regards the opperation of his hand.

And read this, and whatever else is directed unto you by the Lords faithful servants and Hand-maids, whom he moves as Instruments to make known his minde unto you; and neglect not the *great salvation* now begun to be spoken of; The door of Hope is open, and a price is put into your hands; sleep not away your time, like the foolish *Virgins*, until the Door be shut against you; Buy *Oyl without money*, that your *Lamps may be trimmed and kept burning*, that you may not stumble and fall upon the Rock of *Israel*; They that are fallen had a Day, and the Lord gave them warning, both by word and writing in their day, and this is your day in which the Lord waits to be gracious unto you, and his Patience and long-suffering calls you to Repentance. Oh! that you did but know in this your day, the desire & breathings of the Lords servants for your Eternal good, and the things which doth belong unto your peace, and what it is that the Lord requires of you, yet a little while and the light is with you, whilest you have it walk in it least your candle be put out, and your Sun go down, and the shadows of the evening overtake you, whilest you have an opertunity exercise your selves as the servants of the Lord in doing good, and following after righteousnesse, for this is that which God requires of you all, from the least unto the greatest, to do justly, to love mercy, work Righteousnesse and walk humbly before him all the dayes of your appointed time, that he may be glorified by you in your life time, and you may have peace in your end.

Kingstone upon Thames, T. S.
11. of the 4th month.
1660.

THE END.